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TAGS: [BEXP](#) [EINV](#) [ECON](#) [HO](#) [BFIF](#)

SUBJECT: Honduras 2005 BFIF Program Summary

REF: STATE 189815

1. This is a summary on programmatic outcomes of Honduras' use of 2005 BFIF program funds.

2. Embassy Honduras would like to thank EB/CBA for continued financial support of our joint Commercial-Economic outreach initiatives. Post worked closely with the Honduran-American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) and local Chambers of Commerce in designing a "CAFTA Road Show" series of presentations throughout Honduras, with particular focus on business communities outside of the capital and commercial hubs. The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), U.S. Foreign Commercial Service (FCS), EconOff, and the AMCHAM have put together presentations that highlight CAFTA's advantages, and also their services available to assist Honduran importers of U.S. goods and services. In addition to the 'Road Show' presentation, Econ/Comm representatives met with multiple local businesses and business organizations.

3. From June through September 2005, Post presented to Chambers of Commerce in nine regions, including: La Lima, Choluteca, El Progreso, Villa Nueva, Puerto Cortes, Comayagua, Choloma, Cortes, and Atlantida. Post provided information on FCS and FAS services, and the elements of and opportunities presented by CAFTA. EconOff then engaged Chamber members in town hall style question and answer sessions. Executive Directors of the Chambers were appreciated the briefing on the services provided by FCS, and will be including FCS product and event promotions in their newsletters. Many Chamber Presidents also expressed their appreciation for the outreach by the Embassy to their region and look forward to continued information sharing with Economics Section.

A taste of results

4. The President of the Chamber of Atlantida committed to partnering with the FCS in recruiting for International Buyer Program (IBP) shows, and hopes to jointly generate success stories from their office. No companies from this region have to date participated in IBPs, a statistic that, following our presentation to them, the Chamber of Atlantida has committed to changing.

5. In preparing for this series of presentations, Econ/Comm section held planning and promotional meetings in San Pedro Sula, Honduras' business center located three hours north of the capital. A septel to follow will outline recent and rapid growth and investment in this northern city. FCS and EconOff have now established contacts in important business communities throughout the country, which will increase efficiency in FCS recruitment for tradeshow and enrich EconOff reporting.

6. In the San Pedro area, Econoff and Commercial Specialist met with multiple nearby Chambers of Commerce, the AMCHAM, U.S. businesses and trade groups. In a meeting with the Association of Manufacturers, the FCS Commercial Specialist successfully used his presentation to recruit for an apparel trade show ("MAGIC") in Las Vegas. In the three days following that speaking engagement, he was contacted by 10 companies interested in more information on the Commercial Service, and 6 registered and attended this tradeshow. This was the first time textile maquilas participated in a Honduran delegation to this show. Trade shows are by far the number one generator of Export Success Stories for FCS Tegucigalpa.

7. In every Chamber of Commerce presentation, EconOff heard concerns about small businesses and their ability to compete in an increasingly global world. In response to this need, Econ/FCS capitalized on the visit to San Pedro Sula in October of senior Small Business Administration (SBA) officials and invited SBA's Assistant Administrator of International Programs Manny Rosales to address Chamber of Commerce members on the role of small business in the U.S. and on the structure and philosophy of the SBA. Mr. Rosales also met with and advised his counterpart within the

Honduran Ministry of Trade and Industry on possible areas of partnership. In a subsequent editorial in the nationally distributed daily newspaper La Prensa, Chamber of Cortes Executive Director Raul Reina publicly thanked the SBA for Mr. Rosales' offer for continued support and technical assistance and challenged the Honduran government to use the SBA's successful programs as models for their own small business initiatives.

Finances

18. Per reftel request, Post reports that it spent approximately USD 3,153.20 of the USD 3,600 provided for CAFTA and Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) outreach. The Commercial Service funded a portion of travel expenses for San Pedro Sula programs, which allowed Post to leverage BFIF funds and reach more cities. As requested, post will fax to the attention of Gale Grey a copy of all travel vouchers and receipts for a detailed accounting of all funds.

19. Post plans to use this year's program to further leverage and consolidate the successes made possible by the 2005 BFIF program. Post looks forward to receiving additional information on proposal submission guidelines for the 2006 BFIF program. Finally, Post reiterates its appreciation for EB/CBA 2005 support and for the highly successful program made possible by those funds.

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